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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a selected review of the literature pertaining to corporate advocacy (non-product advertising by corporations, addressing political or social issues). More specifically, the paper examines research from the communication, business, public relations, and advertising literature dealing with justifications for the practice of corporate advocacy, analyses of particular advocacy campaigns, the effects of advocacy attempts, and target audiences for such campaigns. In addition to reviewing this literature, the paper offers directions for future research in this relatively recent area. Forty-four references are attached. (Author/SR)

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Corporate Advocacy: A Selected Review of the Literature

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Abstract

This paper provides a selected review of the literature pertaining to corporate advocacy. More specifically, it examines research from the communication, business, public relations and advertising literature dealing with justifications for the practice, analyses of particular advocacy campaigns, the effects of advocacy attempts, and target audiences for such campaigns. In addition to reviewing this literature, the paper offers directions for future research in this relatively recent emergent area.

Corporate Advocacy: A Selective Review of the Literature

In 1979, Sethi wrote that as much as 40% of corporate advertising was concerned with "controversial social issues dealing with one or more aspects of then current national public policy debate" (Sethi, 1979, p. 70). Baldwin observed that at the start of this decade there was a significant increase in the amount of non-product advertising by the Fortune 500 (Baldwin, 1980, p. 23; Dardenne, 1982, p. 34). By 1983, over half of the Fortune 500, including 48 of the top 50 companies, were engaged in some form of non-product advertising ("Corporate Advertising Costs," 1984, p. 22); and by 1984, American corporations were spending over a billion dollars a year on corporate communications, "primarily for image advertising" of one form or another (Botwinick, 1984, p. 12).

Research, both within the academic community and within the business community, has examined aspects of non-product advertising. However, there has not been, as yet, any effort to present previous research as a body of literature. We agree with Meadow's 1981 clarion that there is clearly a "need for systematic study of this advertising" (p. 81), and we offer this paper as a state-of-the-art review of one form of non-product advertising: corporate advocacy or advocacy advertising. We ground our rationale for focusing upon corporate advocacy in the following two considerations. The first concerns recent changes in the operating environment of corporate America, where an

increase in public consciousness of corporate actions has led to changes in organizational accountability. The second concerns the response of the modern corporations to these changes. That is, we view corporate advocacy as a use of advertising to increase organizational involvement in political issues, and to present an "identifiable" image or "persona" within the socio-political environment.

This paper presents a review of recent literature dealing with corporate advocacy research from the fields of communication, public relations, advertising, and business. We present this research by examining first, what we term "definitional considerations" behind corporate advocacy. By this we mean what are the substantive theoretic issues concerning this practice discussed in the literature. More specifically, we present what we feel are the substantive theoretic issues concerning this practice as discussed in the literature. In this paper we attempt to address the following questions: What is corporate advocacy? What justifications are offered for it? To what role is it relegated? How is its effectiveness defined and/or measured? We present second, a review of the literature dealing with case studies in the field of corporate advocacy. We conclude our review by offering conclusions concerning corporate advocacy and suggesting some directions for future research. In sum then, the present paper examines corporate advocacy as an area of study beginning with definitional concerns.

Definitional Considerations: The Functions and Scope of Corporate Advocacy

Definitions and Background

Meadow (1981) observed that the overall phenomenon of non-product advertising has gone under a variety of names (p. 72). As a sub-group of non-product advertising, "corporate advocacy" has also been labeled variously as advocacy advertising, counter advertising, idea advertising, issue-oriented advertising, public interest advertising and adversary advertising.

Several definitions have been advanced for the phenomenon of corporate advocacy. In what was labeled the "only study comprehensively examining advocacy advertising campaigns" (Meadow, 1981, p. 71), Sethi (1977) defined corporate advocacy as the "propagation of ideas and elucidation of controversial social issues in a manner that supports the position and interests of the sponsor while expressly denying the accuracy of facts and downgrading of the sponsor's opponent" (p. 7; Sethi, 1979, p. 70). The Opinion Research Corporation defines issue advertising as a "company's own point of view on controversial public policy issues that affects their business" (Welty, 1981, p. 29). In a later work, Heath (1980) defined corporate advocacy as the "research, analysis, design and mass dissemination of arguments on issues contested in the public dialogue in an attempt to create a favorable, reasonable, and informed public

opinion which in turn influences institutions' operating environments" (p. 371). These definitions illustrate that corporate advocacy concerns the communicative efforts of institutions to address public policy issues perceived as affecting the sponsoring institution's operations.

Theoretic justifications for the use of corporate advocacy are usually grounded in perceptions of how the operating environment of institutions has changed in the past two decades. Meadow (1981) observed that there could be "little doubt that the environment in which multinational business corporations conduct their affairs has changed in recent years" (p. 70), and Lindheim (1980) suggested that the "problem was that "society has changed, but institutions have not, and we've lost all confidence in . . .institutions" (p. 33). Heath (1980) observed that a by-product of the civil rights, ecology, and antiwar movements of the 1960s was an increase sense of accountability directed toward major institutions. "Due to the penchant of United States citizens to seek an ever-more-perfect state, a confluence of interests focuses on the accountability and performance of major institutions" (p. 370).

According to much of the literature, the practice of corporate advocacy is a direct response on the part of institutions to these changes in the operating environment. The realization that erosion of public support "handicaps all levels of corporate operations and jeopardizes [corporate] survival" (Jones & Chase, 1979, p. 7) forced the contemporary business

institution "to become a political animal as well as an economic machine" ("The Corporate Image," 1979, p. 47). Proclaiming that concerns of public policy were "not the exclusive domain of government," researchers have argued the right of corporate America "to participate in the formation of public policy" (Jones & Chase, 1979, p. 7).

Part of the exercise of that right has been the widespread use of corporate advocacy, as organizations that had "previously preferred a low profile have displayed new militancy and now engage in advocacy advertising, corporate image advertising, public speaking campaigns and political action in concert with employee and stockholder groups" (Judd, 1984, p. 15). The use of message advertising did not start with corporate America. Other organized groups such labor organizations and private volunteer groups had used message advertising to "publicize their commitment to issues or simply to proselytize." But the corporate use of advocacy advertising began "in earnest during the oil crisis of the early 1970's and was led most notably by Mobil. Facing attacks by the media, the public and even the government, the oil companies began advocacy campaigns to explain and defend their hugh profits after the Arab oil boycott" ("Issue Ads Polish Corporate Image," 1986, p. 44). Sethi (1979) wrote that the dramatic increase in corporate advocacy reflected

> a recognition on the part of business, of their low credibility and trust amongst large segments of the U.S.

> population. Due to concern about the marked deterioration in the sociopolitical environment in which business operates in the United States, new emphasis has been placed on informing, educating, and persuading the general public . . .about the role of business in society. (pp. 68-69)

A major problem with corporate advocacy, as with all forms of corporate advertising, is that it must function in the very inhospitable situation which necessitates it. Corporate advocacy "must do its work in a hostile environment: a public environment generally disapproving of business as an institution" (Welty, 1981, p. 29). Exactly how this "work" is conceptualized constitutes the next section of this paper.

The "Work" of Corporate Advocacy

The literature discussing corporate advocacy delineates various "roles" or "reasons" for the practice. One of the most dominant is a belief on the part of practitioners, that the use of corporate advocacy is mandated by the dialogic nature of the relationship among business, the government, and the people within society. For example, O'Toole (1975) argued that the use of corporate advocacy advertising "filled a vital need expoused by the bourgeoning information requirements of a complex society" and offered organizations "a means of fulfilling their obligations to, or social contract with, that society" (p. 14). Advocacy advertising offered "the only [communication] means available . . .[to] individual corporations within [the] system"

and thus added "to the supply of fact, opinion and interpretations from which the public shapes its own conclusions. And with issues becoming increasingly complex, more information has to be better than less" (p. 15; Crable & Vibbert, 1985, p. 14). Heath (1980) concurred when he wrote that corporate advocacy was "vital [as] a means for promoting understanding among people over ever-more-complex issues" (p. 372), and "required in our vast and complex society [because it] foster[s] communication among a variety of groups and interests" (p. 377).

Others ground support for the practice of corporate advocacy in the potential "benefits" it can procure for corporations. For example, this form of advertising can help to produce for the corporation an identifiable public image. As Botwinick (1984) wrote, the business community "places a high degree of importance on corporate image" (p. 12; Poltrack, 1985, p. 56), and several institutions have employed campaigns designed to help develop an identifiable organizational persona. That is, "they package and sell themselves as well as the products or services they provide" (Towers, 1982, p. M48).

There are differences between general "image" ads and advocacy advertising; "image ads primarily try to make friends [while] advocacy advertising is designed to show the company taking a position" ("Issue Ads Polish Corporate Image," 1986, p. 44). However, research in this area holds that the engagement in the practice of corporate advocacy advertising is itself a

process of image building for the corporation. Sethi (1979) noted that "some forms of image advertising have taken on advocacy characteristics" (p. 70), and argued that corporate advocacy advertising should be "an integral part of the total corporate communications program" (1980, p. 16). A "high level of integrity in the discussion of controversial issues" can "improve a firm's credibility, it can induce greater public trust in its products and services" (p. 70).

Garbett noted that "the less filled out a company's image is, the more subject it is to wild distortions" (Dardenne, 1982, p. 47). But by its very nature an effective advocacy campaign can help "fill out" the corporate image. As Sethi (1980) pointed out "effective political participation demands the advancement of a coherent political position" (p. 14).

Within the business community, executives of companies that have engaged in corporate advocacy advertising view it as an important part of an effective image building campaign. For example, Mobil's Herbert Schmertz says the goal behind the company's high profile advocacy efforts "is not to have people love us. It's more complex. . . . [We] want people to take us seriously intellectually" ("The Corporate Image: PR To the Rescue," 1979, p. 54). Donald Rotunda, of United Technologies

> defends his issue ad spending as part of his company's overall campaign. . . .[The campaign] lends the company's name to the "Great Debate" of current affairs, [and] it

functions as a small but vital part of the company's overall corporate identity campaign. (Poltrack, 1985, p. 56)

At a minimum, advocacy campaigns can help "provide a language and a context for . . .broader lobbying efforts" (Baldwin, 1980, p. 25).

A second potential "benefit" is that a successful program of corporate advocacy can help foster, within the public sector, a sense of "increased understanding" of the sponsoring organization. For example, Sethi (1979) wrote that a successfully handled campaign of corporate advocacy would be an "effective tool in contributing to an improved public understanding of what can be reasonably expected of business in fulfilling societal expectations" (p. 78). Dardenne (1982) concurred, observing that an important role for corporate advocacy was to "help create understanding among employees, the public, the financial community, government, and other publics" (p. 35).

The research concerning corporate advocacy suggests that another potential benefit accruing to the sponsoring organization may be increased public support within the socio-political environment. In fact, the potential of corporate advocacy to engender active support for the organization has led some to label the practice "grass-roots lobbying" (Nadel, 1976, pp. 65-71; Sethi, 1979, p. 70; Sethi, 1980, pp. 15-16), and suggest that it functions to help an organization build a "constituency" of support for a particular position or policy. For example,

Lindheim (1980) maintained that "constituency building" was based "on the notion that there are constituencies for the various interests of the corporation. It logically following that it is important to build those constituencies" (p. 35; "The Corporate Image: PR To The Rescue," 1979, p. 47; Lindheim, 1980, p. 35).

Finally, some researchers maintain that the role of corporate advocacy is not to increase public support for the organization, but, conversely to encourage a state of public resignation or apathy toward business. For example, Baldwin (1980) quoted Rutgers University professor Peter Sandman's suggestion that the unstated goal of advocacy campaigns like Mobil's "is inaction." Baldwin added, "big business demands nothing more than total apathy" (p. 25). Sethi (1979) concurred when he noted that advocacy advertising "asks no action on the part of the audience beyond a favorable attitude and passive approval conduce to successful operation in the marketplace" (p. 70).

Clearly the literature suggests a variety of roles or reasons for the practice of corporate advocacy. The final theoretical issue addressed herein concerns the efficacious nature of the practice. In other words, what claims are made for or against the ability of advocacy advertising to actually produce desired effects.

Corporate Advocacy and "Effect"

Within the corpus of advocacy literature, there is a concern

with the efficacious nature of the practice. We have chosen to present aspects of the "effects" literature in two parts. The next section of this paper will detail case studies that have focused on assessing effect. In this section we offer some of the more general theoretic issues concerning "effect" that have been raised in the advocacy literature.

Even general concerns about effect necessarily have to be grounded in considerations of the target audience. As a body of literature, however, our current state of knowledge regarding corporate advocacy suggests there is much confusion concerning the "public" at whom these efforts are focused, and how successful these ads are at accomplishing anything. In essence, the literature concerning corporate advocacy suggests that the practice suffers from "poorly defined strategy, objectives, and audience" (Dardenne, 1982, p. 35), making any kind of assessment of effect difficult (Welty, 1981, p. 29).

For example, Baldwin (1980) suggests that the intended audience of Mobil's advocacy efforts is either "a particular class of opinion leaders -- reporters, business officials, politicians, or even prospective shareholders" (p. 24), or somewhere between an audience "that reads [the ads] because they express views some people love to hate. . . . [and those] who read the copy because it expounds opinions they love to love" (p. 22). An executive from Hill & Knowlton doubts that Mobil's advocacy accomplishes much and questions, "What's the audience? Is Mobil speaking to the converted? I don't know who they're

talking to." ("The Corporate Image: PR To The Rescue," 1979, p. 54). On the other hand, Mobil's Schaertz is quoted as saying that "each ad has its own audience. . . . The audience could be the president of the United States, it could be a group of congressmen, it could be press people or the general public" ("Issue Ads Polish Corporate Image," 1986, p. 44).

But, again, it is important to remember that "effectiveness" is determined, at least in part, by the target audience. Research conducted by the public relations firm of Burson-Marsteller suggests that any advocacy campaign aimed at members of Congress was doomed to failure from inception. According to the 1981 survey issue advertising was "nearly unanimously dismissed as having no value whatsoever for communicating directly with congressional staffers" (Welty, 1981, p. 29).

> Congressional staffers placed issue advertising in regional magazines, general interest magazines, on local radio, in regional daily newspapers, and in weekly district newspapers as among the ten least least effective means of getting a message across to them. (Poltrack, 1985, p. 57)

Similarly, issue ads were a poor choice to try to influence the investment community (Poltrack, 1985, p. 57).

But there is little doubt that corporate advocacy is being read by somebody, usually identified as "the public at large" (Poltrack, 1985, p. 56). Corporations such as Mobil, Grace,

United Technologies, and International Paper that have been engaging in advocacy campaigns have received impressive feedback in form of letters and reprint requests ("Issue Ads Polish Corporate Image," 1986, p. 45; Poltrack, 1985, p. 56). Further, surveys in 1982 and 1984 by the Roper Organization, "25 percent of the respondents said that their opinions had been altered as the result of [advocacy] advertising" ("Issue Ads Polish Corporate Image," 1986, p. 45).

Despite research indicating that the ads have little effect, there appears to be great support for corporate advocacy within the community of practitioners. As Poltrack (1985) observed, "Even some of issue advertising's biggest proponents are not sure that issue ads are read. Nor are they sure it matters." There is a belief that advocacy campaigns have a "positive rub-off in the business and financial communities," and "raise the profile of a company in Washington" (p. 57). At the least, the ads are viewed as a way to "provide the already converted with rhetorical ammunition." According to Harvey Shulman, former director of the Media Access Project, corporate advocacy serves "to reinforce the attitudes of those who already agree with them" (Baldwin, 1980, p. 24). The next section of this paper reviews case studies that have examined advocacy campaigns.

Effects Studies

Staples (1977) incorporated the belief statements of 23 individuals, obtained through interviews, about public transportation, offshore drilling by U.S. oil companies, and government regulation of the oil industry into advocacy advertisement messages (attributed to Consumer Reports, Mobil Oil Corporation, or the Federal Energy Administration), and showed them to 192 respondents. Among his findings were that: (a) no more attitude change was evidenced for subjects assigning high credibility to the source than for those assigning low credibility; (b) no more attitude change emerged for the implicit or explicit conclusions; (c) no more attitude change was demonstrated for one-sided or two-sided message conditions; and (d) neither primary nor recency order produced differential attitude change effects.

In a study of oil company advocacy advertising perceptions among 176 college students, Cozby (1981) found that: (a) crisis perceptions (gasoline shortages) positively correlated with gas dependency buy not with advertising awareness; (b) advocacy affected respondent attitudes toward the advertisements but not toward corporate social responsibility or potential supportive behavior; (c) crisis perception influenced potential supportive behavior, but not corporate social responsibility or

advertisement attitudes; and (d) interaction effects emerged for crisis perception and advocacy as effectors upon potential supportive behavior and advertisement attitudes but not social responsibility.

Smart (1984) utilized six advocacy messages pertaining to offshore exploration for oil and gas in a study designed to assess the impact of different types of advocacy advertisements on attitudes, recall, and behavior. The stimuli employed varied in their message strength and specification of the adversary. Through a field experiment involving mailings to households in five states, the researcher found: (a) no significant effects as a result of variation in message intensity of the advertisements or specification of the adversary; (b) credit card holding was not a significant factor (in connection with the behavioral measure, requests for a brochure described in the advertisement); (c) message reading emerged as an important blocking variable, such that those who had read some or a portion of the message stimulus had significantly more favorable attitudes toward the issue involved than those who had not engaged in this behavior at all.

Auto Companies

Case studies focusing upon the use of corporate advocacy deal primarily with two industries: automotive manufacturing and oil corporations.

Foss (1984) and Geisler (1984) conducted detailed analyses

of the "bailout" of the Chrysler Corporation by the federal government and advocacy efforts to regain the trust of the American public in the firm's products. Foss specifically analyzed Chrysler's advertising campaign as a rhetorical vehicle to expunge its guilt and create a new public identity. The bailout was described as symbolizing three failures for the corporation: the inability of the corporation to meet quality standards mandated by the public, its unresponsiveness to the public's demand for small cars, and finally its inability to make a profit. Redemption strategies utilized by Chrysler in response to this situation centered on the creation of a new identity through its advertising. Foss reviewed advertisements in magazines and newspapers, and on television for the 1978-1981 period. Her analysis identified ten major strategies, some of which were contradictory in nature: portrayal of the company as a victim of changing times, association with the Japanese, the offering of rebates for its customers, dissociation from the low quality of the past, comparison of its products with those of other companies, dissociation from Japanese, the prominent display of its gas-mileage ratings, personality endorsements of its cars, the offering of money-back guarantees, and finally, an appeal to Americanism.

In her analysis of the Chrysler bailout story Geisler focused upon the reality redefinition/reconstruction engineered by the company's lobbyists in obtaining federal assistance, identifying three defensive strategies utilized by the firm

centered around "the corporation's right to survive": the need to maintain strong competition in the automotive industry, the effects on non-support upon the U.S. balance of payments, and the potential loss of jobs and associated effects on the U.S. economy.

Paonessa (1984) performed an analysis of corporate advocacy strategies employed by General Motors in connection with four publics: the media, the government, consumers and consumer groups, and the company's employees. Initially, Paonessa describes the operating environment of General Motors, and then details how the corporation attempted to control/influence each of these advocacy segments. Finally, the author provides an in-depth description of General Motors' corporate advocacy program.

Oil Corporations

The oil industry has also received frequent attention in the corporate advocacy literature. While a number of case studies have been reported on the Mobil Oil Corporation, few have examined any other petroleum companies. An exception is a study by Vibbert (1984) examining Phillips Petroleum and the exercise of epideictic discourse through its genesis of the "performance story" as an advocacy advertising strategy. Vibbert argued that this advertising program was directed at non-product "image" advertisements through the use of shared value premises (between the corporation and consumers). Four criteria were employed in

the development of this strategy: (a) stories would deal with what is and not with what could be; (b) stories needed to be understood easily and appear relevant; (c) stories had to demonstrate immediate benefit; and (d) stories had to be uniquely identifiable with the source (p. 6). According to the author, this type of discourse was utilized to create dispositions among consumers at "an appropriate moment" rather than to necessarily effect immediate purchasing behavior, in order to encourage "proper" legislative support for certain public policies and "mutually satisfying solutions to shared problems" (p. 5).

Through review of 149 one-half page Sunday newspaper magazine section advertisements ("Observations") by the Mobil Oil Corporation over the 1976-1980 period, Crable and Vibbert (1983) uncovered a similar epideictic advocacy pattern. Through this program Mobil attempted to communicate values shared between the corporation and consumers as a vehicle for image building. Six major issues were focused upon through these "Observations": regulation; the Congress; the media; technology; conservation; and the "common sense" of the common people.

Dionisopoulos and Vibbert (1983) examined the Mobil "persona" through its efforts at organizational apologia. Through "op-ed" advertisements and bi-weekly "observations" columns in newspapers, the corporation developed a regular communication vehicle with the American public and created the impression of being the "voice" of the oil industry. An in-depth analysis is provided concerning Mobil's use of newspaper and

magazine advocacy efforts in response to a report by C.B.S. news accusing Mobil of inappropriate corporate fiscal practices.

Anderson (1985) conducted an analysis of the argumentative methods incorporated in Mobil's 642 op-ed page advertisements in the New York Times over a 14-year period (1970-1983) through both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The researcher found that in consideration of its long-term objectives Mobil attempted in these advertisements to convey its sense of social responsibility, to communicate its energy priorities, and reinforce its belief in free enterprise. In terms of short-term objectives, the corporation sought to undermine its political opposition through these advertisements and in particular focused on negative stereotypes.

Williamson (1983) provided an examination of Mobil's corporate advocacy campaign from the perspective of rhetorical transcendence, finding that the corporation sought to identify its actions with higher values, while transcending the guilt associations of "lesser orders." More specifically, Williamson noted two recurrent themes in Mobil's transcendent identifications: American energy independence and freedom. These identifications were woven intricately with nationalistic terms and symbolizations in an effort to create an identification with traditional American values.

Simons (1983) performed an analysis of Mobil's op-ed advertisements through the perspective of system-oriented conflict rhetoric, suggesting that through such rhetoric a

corporation such a Mobil offers itself as a legitimate system representative and then argues for common interests. The author describes how Mobil went about achieving this aim in these advertisements and assesses their success in convincing the readers to believe this line of argument.

A final study of oil companies in the corporate advocacy literature provides an analysis of both Mobil and Exxon Corporation advertisements during the 1974-1984 period. On the basis of his analysis, Kurzbard (1985) concluded that both firms attempted to offer a justification not only for their own operational practices, but also for the American socio-economic system, with corporate motives emanating from an abiding commitment to the nation's well-being.

Other Case Studies

Additional advocacy case studies have been reported in the literature which do not focus of the automotive or oil industry. Goldzwig and Cheney (1984) examined the movement of Catholic bishops to address the issue of nuclear arms through the development of a pastoral letter on war and peace. The attempt to blend moral theology and public policy provided a new role for the bishops, defined in the study as corporate advocacy. The message was aimed at three explicit audiences (U.S. Catholics, the Reagan Administration, all those of good will) and an implied audience (other national and international hierarchical elements of the Church itself). The letter's content focused on basic

moral principles through an outline of broad, but firm, positions (the purview of the Church) and stayed away from technical defense strategies (the purview of the Reagan Administration). According to the authors, the bishops displayed rhetorical sensitivity to internal and external audiences, seeking widespread consultation in the development of the letter. The united effort behind this movement sought not only to affect an audience external to the Church, but also to affect a new identification with the Church among the faithful.

In a study of the atomic power industry after the 1979 Three Mile Island accident, Dionisopoulos (1984) examined the corporate advocacy campaigns of the industry as an effort to secure "definitional hegemony" over the issues associated with the incident. Specifically, the researcher analyzed newspaper advertisements generated by the industry to recapture public confidence through the establishment of a frame of reference for interpreting information concerning the accident. As an advocacy campaign, public support was sought to influence public policy concerning the future of the industry, since public opinion was likely to be a defining element in determining atomic policy following Three Mile Island. In order to accomplish this, the industry attempted to project a purified image of itself, the incident being described as a "learning experience," as having been exaggerated in the media, and as evidence that available safety technology was, in fact, effective.

In the only study available in the literature to look at

corporate advocacy from an international perspective (the United States, Japan, Canada, and Western Europe), Rau (1984) found that: (a) issue advertising is more widespread in the United States than abroad; (b) issue advertisers prefer hard-hitting messages and are willing to work with government agencies in the development of these messages as they are directed at the public interests; (c) multinational firms are more likely to employ issue advertisements at home than abroad; and (e) non-U.S. firms believe they should approach the appropriate government agencies about issue advertising programs they are developing.

Brown and Crable (1973) conducted an extensive study of magazine advertisements generated by various industries associated with ecological issues, specifically in the context of the emergence of these advertisements in the early 1970s, in response to public concern about the environment. As a result of their analysis the authors concluded that such advertisements allowed corporations to "sell their side of the story," received repeated voluntary exposure to their messages through incorporation in magazines, gave the magazines involved a role as a watchdog of environmental concerns, and proclaimed corporate innocence of pollution violations through two forms (innocence "retained" and innocence "regained"). This study represents one of the few efforts in the literature to examine corporate advocacy endeavors across various industries in response to a particular public concern and to provide an in-depth analysis of advocacy advertisements in magazines as opposed to newspapers or

television.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions and implications can be drawn from the literature reviewed herein. Research concerning the practice of corporate advocacy has really not progressed much beyond the point of establishing the fact that it indeed goes on. Within this body of literature some of what we would consider to be basic theoretic issues appear to need further conceptualization. While most researchers would appear to agree upon what constitutes the practice of corporate advocacy advertising, there is little agreement concerning its purpose, specific role, target audience or effect. This situation would seem to be, at least in part responsible for the series of blanket justifications or critical assessments found within this body of literature.

Two industries have been the primary foci of corporate advocacy research: the petroleum industry and the automotive industry. Analyses have generally been conducted in a longitudinal manner over a period of years, employing television, newspaper, or magazine advertisements as a data base (typically one of the three in a single study rather than a combination thereof). The majority of the case studies reported examine a single corporate entity, generally speaking, in the private sector. Few industry-wide studies are available in the literature. One study (Brown & Crable, 1973) reported on the advocacy activities of various industries in regard to single

socio-political issue (the environment). Another study compared private versus public sector organizations (Staples, 1977) in the effects of corporate advocacy campaigns. Additionally, only one study was concerned with multinational firms (Rau, 1984). Finally, nearly every research study reported focused upon the effects of corporate advocacy efforts upon external audiences, the single exception being the study by Paonessa (1984), which also addressed the internal corporate audience.

On the basis of the foregoing analysis and literature review, we believe the following research endeavors are advocated: (a) studies of other industries (e.g., chemical companies, utility companies, tobacco companies); (b) further studies of private sector versus public sector corporate advocacy campaigns; (c) comparative studies of companies within a single industry in terms of their corporate advocacy efforts; (d) studies of corporate advocacy campaigns directed at internal versus external audiences, or in conjunction with one another; (e) further studies of corporate advocacy strategies within internationally based corporations; (f) studies of corporate advocacy techniques employed in print versus broadcast media; (g) comparative studies of product and service industry corporate advocacy endeavors; (h) the identification of advocacy strategies for different audiences (e.g., government lobbying efforts versus "grassroots" lobbying aimed at securing public support).

In 1975, O'Toole wrote that the practice of advocacy advertising had progressed sufficiently to provide some standards

for those who wished to engage in it. With the benefit of twelve years of hindsight, we suggest that our knowledge of this endeavor has progressed little beyond the rudimentary stage. However, we also believe that a possible reason for this condition is that there has not been, until now, any effort to treat literature in this area as a body of research. As a result, each new study seems disjointed from others. We offer this work as a preliminary step in assessing the state-of-the-art of corporate advocacy.

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